

Those Mightily Used of God, Part 1 - Acts 19:21-23 - March 29th, 2009

- If you were to ask me who my hero of the faith was, you would undoubtedly send me into a tailspin of sorts, trying to pick just one.
- However, if you were to more specifically ask which hero of the faith I admire most for how God used them, well, that's a little easier.
- Paul would most certainly be a top pick, but the choice would still be difficult because they all possess certain common characteristics.

- It is for this reason, that I've chosen the title; "Those Mightily Used of God." The text before us unveils some of these character qualities.
- If you were to do a character study of the heroes of the faith, you would certainly find a number of common denominators in all of them.
- Today, we'll see three of them in the Apostle Paul, as he now gets ready to "press on" during this, his third and final missionary journey.

1. They're in tune with the will of God (Verse 21)

21 After all this had happened, Paul decided to go to Jerusalem, passing through Macedonia and Achaia. "After I have been there," he said, "I must visit Rome also."

v21 Paul decided, or purposed, to go to Jerusalem by way of Macedonia and Achaia, and was intent on going to Rome, which he will do.

- Here's the question; "why did Paul decide to do this, this way?" I suggest it's because he was so in tune with God's call and God's will.
- In effect, Paul not only knew that this was God's will for him; he knew that it was God's way for him to go. Consider the following:

1. God's will is that we're discerning: Paul purposed in his spirit to go, because he was discerning of the leading of the Holy Spirit.

2. God's will involves our serving: Paul had a servant's heart and knew he had to deliver financial support to the church in Jerusalem.

Romans 15:25-29 25 Now, however, I am on my way to Jerusalem in the service of the saints there. 26 **For Macedonia and Achaia were pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem.** 27 They were pleased to do it, and indeed they owe it to them. For if the Gentiles have shared in the Jews' spiritual blessings, they owe it to the Jews to share with them their material blessings. 28 So after I have completed this task and have made sure that they have received this fruit, I will go to Spain and visit you on the way. 29 I know that when I come to you, I will come in the full measure of the blessing of Christ. NIV

1 Corinthians 16:1-4 1 Now about the collection for God's people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do. 2 On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made. 3 Then, when I arrive, I will give letters of introduction to the men you approve and send them with your gift to Jerusalem. 4 If it seems advisable for me to go also, they will accompany me. NIV

3. God's will needs confirming: Paul will soon have the Lord confirm to him that it is indeed His will that he go to Rome.

Acts 23:11 The following night the Lord stood near Paul and said, "Take courage! As you have testified about me in Jerusalem, so you must also testify in Rome." NIV

4. God's will may require risk taking: Paul will leave a semblance of stability when he, by faith, leaves Ephesus for Jerusalem.

5. God's will is that we're soul winning: Paul stays on message with his eyes on the prize. He isn't site-seeing, he is soul-winning!

Philippians 3:13-14 13 Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. NIV

Proverbs 11:30 The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, And he who wins souls is wise. NKJV

2. They're open to the help of others (Verse 22)

22 He sent two of his helpers, Timothy and Erastus, to Macedonia, while he stayed in the province of Asia a little longer.

v22 We're told that Paul sent Timothy and Erastus to Macedonia, because they were his helpers, and had really ministered to him.

- I think sometimes we get the wrong impression of the Apostle Paul. We see him as one of these; "you want it done right do it yourself!"
- The truth of the matter is, Paul had a humble pastor's heart, and wasn't so proud that he wouldn't accept, even ask, for others to help.

1 Corinthians 16:5-6 5 After I go through Macedonia, I will come to you-for I will be going through Macedonia. 6 Perhaps I will stay with you awhile, or even spend the winter, so that you can help me on my journey, wherever I go. NIV

3. They're not disturbed by disturbances (Verse 23)

23 About that time there arose a great disturbance about the Way.

v23 About this time, there came about a great disturbance about the "Way," which as we'll soon see escalates into a full on riot.

- Should this come as any surprise? Everywhere the Apostle went, a disturbance was sure to follow. Would to God that we would disturb!
- I'm not saying that we should start a riot, but certainly we should be disturbing the powers of darkness in this dark and dying world.

Luke 6:26 Woe to you when all men speak well of you, for that is how their fathers treated the false prophets. NIV